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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [AMGT](#) [HR](#)

SUBJECT: ZAGREB WEEKLY ACTIVITY REPORT

1. (SBU) COALITION NEGOTIATIONS CONTINUE BETWEEN HDZ AND
HSS/HSLS GROUP:

On December 3, the ruling HDZ began formal talks on a possible coalition agreement with the Croatian Peasants/Croatian Social Liberal Party (HSS/HSLS) group that holds eight parliamentarians. Initial meetings on December 3 and 4 set the broad parameters for the talks. HSS sources told us that discussions will break into about ten working groups focused on a dozen or so issues, and would take a week to ten days at most. The HSS source said it was not guaranteed that the negotiations would produce a coalition, but indicated that even if the HSS could not agree to join, it was still likely the HDZ would form the government, using the seats of other small parties. (NOTE: It is mathematically possible for the HDZ to gather the necessary 77 seats, but we believe the most likely outcome remains an HDZ coalition with HSS in it.) On December 5, PM Sanader sounded increasingly confident in his comments to the media that he would be able to form a government that would have the support of at least 80 parliamentarians. More details will follow septel. (RHoltzapple)

2. (U) AMBASSADOR BRADTKE PRESS INTERVIEWS:

On November 28, Ambassador Bradtke gave an interview to daily Jutarnji list, explaining the U.S. positions on Kosovo and Bosnia and Herzegovina and welcoming Croatia into the UNSC. On the Croatian elections, he called for all sides to put aside partisan differences and work together to form a government; a similar statement was placed in the November 30 edition of Vecernji list. On November 29 the Ambassador interviewed with Zagreb-based Radio 101 responding to call-in questions on elections, regional issues, Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran, and Croatia's progress toward NATO membership. (KWetzel)

3. (U) CROATIAN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS CONNECT WITH NATIONAL
MUSEUM OF THE AMERICAN INDIAN:

U.S. Embassy Zagreb sponsored a digital video conference (DVC) on November 29 between the National Museum of the American Indian and secondary school students from Velika Gorica, a large municipality in the Zagreb metropolitan area.

Mr. Jimmy Locklear, the Volunteer Coordinator at the Museum and a member of the Lumbee tribe from North Carolina, spoke about native American culture and heritage, sharing his personal experience with the students. In addition to the DVC, students received a short Embassy tour. The DVC served to further solidify relations with the municipality of Velika Gorica and its public library, which the Public Affairs Section visited last summer.

4. (U) "WELCOME TO HELL" BECOMES "LOVE FOR ALL" IN
WAR-AFFECTED TOWN:

As part of Embassy Zagreb's Entry Level Officer Development

Program, seven first and second tour officers traveled to Gvozd and Vojnic to meet with local officials and community leaders and to visit some of USAID's successful projects in community and economic development and reintegration in this war-affected area. The group discussed local and national issues with mayors of each town, the head of Suncokret (Sunflower, an NGO), the heads of the women's organization and the new library in Vojnic. They also visited a new publicly funded kindergarten aimed at giving children a head start in school. The director of Suncokret led a tour of the community center and discussed how youth activities, including a summer camp drawing in international volunteers, has helped integrate the community and lessened unwanted graffiti. On a sign at the outskirts of Gvozd where once was painted "Welcome to Hell," town youth repainted, "Love for All," an apt emblem of the transformative power of USAID programming in Croatia. (MNice)

15. (U) ZAGREB'S REGIONAL BLACKBERRY EXPANSION BEARING FRUIT: With the recent addition of Embassy Ljubljana, Zagreb now supports Blackberry cell phone programs in seven embassies in the region. In addition to Embassy Zagreb, we provide software and server support to Ljubljana, Kyiv, Belgrade, Sarajevo, Podgorica, and Bucharest and are now on the verge of adding Embassy Tblisi, even though the Blackberry network provider, RIM, doesn't cover Tblisi! Zagreb enables embassies in countries without Blackberry service by setting the devices to "roaming" mode. This allows users on the road access to emails, calendar and contacts even where there is no local service provider. By leveraging our Open Net infrastructure to allow for regional support, Embassy Zagreb hopes to subscribe additional embassies, thereby saving equipment, software and training costs. (TFavret)
BRADTKE